have been made mandatory for cement industry. The cement which does not conform to these norms is required to be destroyed immediately. These norms categorize cement into different varieties on the basis of Its binding strength.

Cement factory in Manipur

2720. SHRI RISHANG KEISHING: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the availability/deposit of limestone in Manipur;

(b) whether the Government of Manipur has proposed for setting up of a 200 M.T. capacity per day cement factory in the State; and

(c) if so, the decision taken by Government to this effect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) As per the Report of the Working Group constituted by the Govenment of India for the formulation of Tenth Five Year Plan for the Cement Industry, Ukhrul District of Manipur State has a total limestone reserves of 21.39 million tonnes scattered at different locations.

(b) and (c) Cement Industry was delicensed in 1991 and since then approval of the Government of India is not required for setting up a cement plant. The entrepreneurs have to only file Industial Entrepreneurs Memorandum (IEM) with this Department. The State Government of Manipur has not forwarded any proposal for setting up of a 200 M.T. capacity per day cement factory in that State.

Industrial growth centres in Manipur

2721. SHRI RISHANG KEISHING: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the year in which industrial growth centres were sanctioned for Manipur;

(b) the amount earmarked for the centres and the amount spent so far;

(c) the physical progress of the centres; and

(d) the time schedule for completion of the centres?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) to (d) Under the Growth Centre Scheme, one growth centre was sanctioned for the State of Manipur in 1998. The contribution of Central Government under the scheme is limited to Rs. 15 crore by way of equity. The remaining funds are to be raised by the State Government and its agencies. So far, Rs.1.5 crore has been released by the Central Government and an expenditure of Rs. .085 crore has been incurred. Acquisition of land by the State Government for setting up of Growth Centre is under progress and it is not possible to fix a time schedule for completion of the centre.

Registration process for intermediates and bulk drug

2722. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have done away with the registration process for intermediates and bulk drug imports meant for exports;

(b) if so, whether this would give a big relief to the domestic pharma industry as it would not only make the import process easier, but would also make the exports economical;

(c) whether this has been welcomed by the exporters; and

(d) if so, to what extent it would be helpful?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has exempted import of drugs under the Advance Licensing Scheme (meant for export production) from the registration process prescribed under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

(b) to (d) This exemption will give a fillip to exports by providing easy access to imported inputs meant for export production. Exemption from the registration process will also lead to reduction in transaction costs of the exporters. As such, it has been welcomed at all levels of the exporting community.

Merchandise exports to US

2723. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :